871 even in those of the oblast', there are often people who have no
875 adequate pedagogical experience or even any education. Moreover, people who have nothing to do with pedagogy, who turned up by chance, people who are not conscientious, often hold leading teaching positions." This is how Zviazda of July 9th, this year, characterizes the administrative workers who are directing the schools in the Belorussian Soviet Republic.

875 The legal position of the Soviet teacher is unbearably difficult,
554 particularly in villages. He is presented with many demands of all kinds, and at the same time no one accepts him. A great deal of additional social work is laid upon him, and at the same time he has no rights. The teacher must necessarily be an "active citizen, a public worker". The activity and public spirit of the teacher is determined by the local Party and soviet authority, which is in most cases uncultured, limited, and often stubborn. The teacher, according to established procedure, is obliged as an active citizen to participate in all of the numerous gatherings which bear absolutely no relation to school matters; he is expected to express himself in a spirit favorable to the local authority at these gatherings. Arranging the program of all gatherings is also his responsibility. The active teacher has to be a regular visitor of the reading rooms, the club, the red corner, the office of the village soviet, the office of the kolkhoz direction, etc; the visits to these village institutions are usually not connected with necessity or real interest. The teacher must /74/ be a member of all soviet organizations and societies; he abolishes illiteracy, must help in the preschool education, collect signatures for loans. Without his participation the bulletin-board newspaper does not appear. Teachers are being induced to participate not only in political but also in economic campaigns, such as the collection of taxes in kind--of grain, potatoes, milk, salvage, and scrap metal--often at the expense of their regular work at the school. The teacher is expected to be a "militant atheist", to read lectures on anti-religious themes and at the time of great holidays to organize anti-religious demonstrations, games and parades with the students. During election campaigns the teacher is the duty-bound propagandist and agitator for the candidates sponsored by the Communist Party. The president of the village soviet, the kolkhoz and especially the secretary of the local Party cell may call on the teacher at any time to fulfill

various obligations nowhere defined, order that the work at school be discontinued for the purpose of organizing some gathering, etc. Every disobedience, protest and especially withdrawal from this so-called social work is fraught with unpleasant consequences for the village teacher who has no rights. He will be labelled anti-social, a saboteur; he will be "dealt with" at public gatherings, in newspapers which are posted and even in the rayon paper, all this without any regard for the safeguarding of the teacher's authority among the students at the school in which he works. Under such conditions can the teacher find time to prepare for his duties at school, carefully draw up his plan of work, accurately correct written assignments of the students, have time for self-instruction and outside training? It is not an accident, then, that in the Bobruiskaya oblast', out of 429 teachers who had registered for outside training in the Pedagogical Institute only 284 completed the plan of study. In fact, the teacher is placed in a position, deprived of rights, in which he "did not, does not, and could not be" in any state regime except the Soviet.

With such a deplorable composition of the teaching cadres, with their superficial professional and general educational level, one should not expect a correct and successful organization of the pedagogical process in the Soviet school. If, furthermore, one considers the abnormal and often unbearable conditions under which students have to study and teachers have to perform their pedagogical duties, it becomes clear why the law concerning general education is not observed. The frequent cases of students who leave school before their time, failures en masse, a shocking decline of grades, with a low level of the knowledge of subjects studied in school, are not surprising.

Last year the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party issued the following resolution:

"The transition from seven-year education to general secondary education (a ten year program) should be completed at the end of the five-year plan in the capitals of the republics, in the subordinate cities of the republics, in the oblast', krai and large industrial centers. Conditions for the full realization of general secondary education (the ten year program) during the next five-year plan should be prepared in other towns and villages."

The Congress also considered it necessary to introduce